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Short Account OF THE ITCH, INVETERATE *Itching Humours,* *Scabbiness and Leprosy:*

Plainly describing
Their Symptoms, Nature, Original Cause
and True Cure, with the Reasons why so many
miss of it for many Months, Years, &c.
Shewing that it may be easily and safely accom-
plished without the Nauseous Use of Brimstone,
Confinement of the Patient, or the Knowledge
of other Persons.

AS ALSO

The imminent Danger those afflicted with
such Defilements of the Skin run, of falling into the
Palsy, Apoplexy, Falling Sickness, Asthma, incurable
Consumption, &c. by Ill Methods of Cure, and
pernicious Mercurial Medicines. Necessary to be
read by all Persons, but more especially those who
are unhappily troubled with the *ITCH*, or any
other Cutaneous Distemper.

By T. S.

The Second Edition, with several Additions.

L O N D O N: Printed, And Sold by T. Child,
at the White-Hart in St. Paul's Church-Yard; A. Dodd at the Pea-
cock without Temple-Bar; and M. Halsey at the Plow and Harrow,
near the Royal Exchange in Cornhil, Booksellers. 1715. Pr. Stitchd, 1s.

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THE PREFACE.

THE first Impression of this little Book being sold off, and the Bookseller calling on me to reprint it, I quickly determined to look it over carefully for that End; and what did not a little conduce to my publishing this second Edition so readily, was, the favourable Reception the first met with from the Publick, who were so indulgent as to esteem it a plain honest Account of the Distempers it treats of, and (what I my self have not Vanity enough to think) more to the purpose than any thing wrote before.

The great Experience also I have had (since I first published this short Account) of the Method I recommended in it as most rational for the Cure of the Itch, inveterate itching Humours, Scabbiness and Leprosy, was another Motive of my venturing it once more into the World; for I can truly say, my Success in curing Cuta-

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neous Diseases (having been exceeding great, perhaps greater than many will easily believe) is a thorough Confirmation of the Efficacy of the Method I have mention'd to use, and by which I have restored abundance of People to perfect Health, who from the inveteracy of the Disease, length of Time they had been afflicted, and from their having often tryed other means in vain, almost despair'd of being cured; of which I could give many Instances, of Men of Worth and Probity, were it proper.

I had some Thoughts of adding, to this second Edition, some particular Remarks and Observations that I have made on the King's-Evil, concerning the Nature and Method of Cure of which, my Experience convinces me, many Persons are very much mistaken; but considering they would enlarge the Book to double the Number of Sheets it now contains, I concluded to omit them, with an Intention however to publish a small Treatise of that Distemper by it self in a little Time.

*In perusing this short Account of the Itch, &c. in order to send it again to the Press, I made such Additions as my further Observations and Experience in those Diseases caus'd me to think necessary;
which*

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which Additions, I wrote as concise as the Nature of them would allow; so that with them the Book doth not now exceed what I at first call'd it, A short Account, &c. Those Additions the Reader will find interspers'd throughout the Third Chapter, and, I believe, will not be displeased with them.

I have added also, at the latter End, an Index to the whole, that those who have not Leisure or Inclination to begin and read the Book quite through (which indeed is by much the best way) may however, by looking over That, know what it contains, and turn to the Page they think most likely to inform them, of what they want chiefly to be acquainted with.

The Index, considering the smallness of the Book it self, may be thought strange by some, it being as large as what is commonly found to a Book of six times the Bulk of this; but their wonder will cease, when they consider that this short Account, under some Authors Pens, would have swell'd perhaps to more than six times its bigness, without containing more, in fact, than it does now: For my part I think the fewer Words a Man expresses his Thoughts in, the better, provided he can be clearly understood; for

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to use more, or be prolix in Writing, serves only, in my Opinion, to puzzle the Cause, or amuse the Reader.

But whosoever Writes and Publishes his Thoughts upon any Subject to the World, would be vain in the last degree, should he expect every one would approve of them; the most Correct Books in all Arts and Sciences, have ever met with ill natur'd and unjust Censure from some, which indeed is no wonder, since Holy Writ it self has not escaped the Ridicule of Profligate Wretches; it is truly said, unhappy is that Person of whom every one speaks well, aluding that there never was or can be such a one, and in that Sense we may say, Vile and Contemptible is the Book which every body likes: The Man therefore who sets Pen to Paper, in order to communicate any thing to the Publick, ought first to resolve to bear, unmov'd, all the Calumny and invidious Reflections that Malice can invent.

This I fully determin'd, when I began the following Account, and shall be altogether unconcerned for the Success it meets with amongst the cavilling part of Mankind.

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I have given my Thoughts freely on the Itch, inveterate Itching Humours, Scabbiness and Leprosy, under one or other of which, almost all Cuticular Eruptions, that are not the immediate Effects of acute Diseases, may be comprised ; I thought it needless in this Short Account to treat particularly of Tetters, Ringworms, &c. more especially since the Medicines that will Cure the Itch, &c. will likewise Cure them, and most, if not all, other Defædations of the Skin that take their Rise from Chronick Distempers.

I am not so opinionated of my own Performances, as to imagine that what I have written is without fault ; yet I hope the Candid and Benevolent Reader will take what I have done in good Part.

He that writes his Sentiments of any Distemper, or concerning any Matter or Thing with unfeigned Sincerity, is, in my Opinion, excusable, tho' he may not be wholly free from Error, and tho' a great Motive of it may be Self Interest, viz. gaining Honour, or increasing his Substance ; but those are truly blamable, who, to obtain either of these, publish to the World, as solemn Truths, their own spritely Inventions, which have no real Founda-

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tion, and which, in Fact, they do not believe themselves.

And that such groundless Hypotheses are to be found among Physical Authors, and that Plain-dealing is a Vertue not always to be met with, may be gathered from the Works of Dr. Sydenham, the most worthy and sincere Physician Europe ever bred, who being importuned to write an History of Chronick Distempers, complained of the difficulty of such a Task, in the following Words.

‘ For among Physical Writers, if you except Hippocrates, and some very few others, scarce any Footsteps can be found whereby I might trace thro’ these impassable Ways, obstructed with so many Difficulties; for the Lights and Helps which Authors promise, are rather Ignis fatui, than true Lights; which rather misguide to Rocks and Precipices, than direct for the finding the Genuine Method of Nature; for most of their Writings are built upon Hypotheses proceeding from their own Fancies; and the very Phænomena of Diseases, of which the History of them consists, as they are described by these, are modelled in the same Shop of Suppositions,

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‘*sitions, and the very Practice wherewith*
‘*they undertake Diseases (which is the*
‘*certain Plague and Destruction of Man-*
‘*kind) is suited to this kind of Postulata,*
‘*and not according to the truth of the*
‘*Thing; so reigning are these Mens Whim-*
‘*sies almost in every Page; and in the*
‘*mean while the Directions of Nature are*
‘*slighted.*

What this most Excellent Physician says is very much to be lamented, for to be swayed by an embrac'd Hypothesis, and to be insincere in what relates so eminently to Life, and Health, the greatest Blessing of it, must surely be highly Criminal, and in the last degree Barbarous.

If I know my own Heart, I have wrote the following Pages with that Integrity that becomes an honest Man, and have given as plain and natural an Account of the Illnesses I have treated about, as I possibly could; for the rest I do not trouble myself, I pretend not to Correctness of Style, all the use I know of Words, is to convey one Man's sense of Things to another, if therefore I can be understood, it is sufficient; this I am satisfied of, from very great Experience, that the Method I have proposed
for

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for the Cure of the Diseases the Title mentions, will, if they are curable, by the Blessing of God, take Effect, and not only in them, but in the King's-Evil, and all Scrophulous Cases also, in a very short time, in proportion to the inveteracy of them, provided the Patients will follow Directions; and such of them who think fit to apply to me, may depend upon faithful and civil Treatment, as I'm sure all who have been under my Care hitherto, will acknowledge they have found.

T. SPOONER.

From my House, next
the Black Horse Inn,
in Lemon Street, in
Goodman's Fields,
Octob. 5. 1715.

A
 Short Account
 OF THE
 ITCH, &c.

CHAP I.

*The Description, Symptoms, Nature,
 and dangerous Consequences of the
 Itch, particular Itching Humours,
 Scabbiness and Leprosy.*

THE *Itch* is a filthy Distemper,
 infesting the external Parts of
 the Body universally, but more
 particularly the Joints, and between
 the Fingers, commonly with Pustulous
 Eruptions raised upon the Scarf-Skin,

by almost unavoidable scratching, occasioned thro' violent itching of the Parts ; from these Pustulous Eruptions, or little Bladders, when broke, there issues a thin Crystalline Humour, which touching any other Part not yet infected, soon causes incessant itching, and, upon scratching, more Bladders to arise.

And by this means the *Itch*, in whatever Part it begins first, is soon spread over the whole Body, and very remarkably fixes upon the Wrists, Hams, and especially between the Fingers, which peculiarly distinguishes a real *Itch* from that slight itching of the Body, many People are troubled with for a short time, commonly about the beginning of Winter, and in the Spring, occasioned only by Straitness, or Constipation, of the Pores of the Skin, thro' change or coldness of the Season, and which mostly goes away upon enlarging, or opening the Pores again, either by proper Exercise or the help of the Bagnio, without further Trouble or Medicines ; yet if it continues, it may lay the Foundation of a true *Itch* soon after

after to follow, as will be shewn hereafter.

When the *Itch* has continued long, and is become confirmed, the little Ulcerations encrease, and the clear Humour before contained in the little Bladders, degenerates to a purulent Matter, which still makes the Disease more Nauseous and Infectious.

Sometimes the *Itch* appears in a dry form, without those Pustules before-mentioned, and then the Scarf-Skin looks red, rugged or uneven, and when by long continuance it is grown inveterate, the Parts affected are covered over with a dry kind of thin Scab, and this is the worst and most stubborn sort of *Itch*, which, as well as the moist kind before spoken of, if neglected, in length of Time, turns to a foul *Scabies*, or *Scabbiness* of the whole Body, quickly to be described.

The moist *Itch*, tho' not so stubborn or virulent as the dry kind, yet, by means of its moisture, sooner and more easily communicates its Infection to Sound Bodies.

And so Contagious is the *Itch* of either sort, that lying in Bed with a Person

son troubled with it, or in the Sheets an itchy Person has lain in, or to wipe one's Hands with the same Cloth, or draw on a Glove such a Person has worn, or even to have Linnen washed with the Linnen of one afflicted with the *Itch*, is sufficient to catch the Distemper; and as the Famous and Ingenious Dr. *Willis* says, ' Certainly the ' Infection of no one Disease is more ' easily and certainly propagated (the ' Plague only excepted) than this of the ' *Itch*.

Yet some Persons are much more subject to be infected with it than others, for in many there is a certain aptness to receive Diseases of this kind, and such Persons catch it sooner than others, as Experience demonstrates; which difference 'tis likely may happen thro' the Natural Structure of the External Pores of the Body, or their being larger in one Person than in another, so as to imbibe or receive the infecting Humour sooner and more surely.

But when one Person in a Family or House is infected with the *Itch*, it commonly runs thro' the whole, and especially

cially feizes on those who Eat, Drink and Lye, or are very conversant with the Person who has so accidentally caught it; and thus the *Itch* is communicated from one Person, and one Family to another, by means of lying in strange Beds, by Children of different Families playing together, or by Servant Maids or Nurses, &c. that have had this loathsome Disease, and come into Families before they are perfectly cured of it.

When the *Itch* is caught by Infection, the Scarf or Outer-Skin only, for some time, is infected, and the Blood not at all tainted with it, and then it may easily and quickly be cured by proper Medicines regularly administered.

But when it has been neglected long, and the little Ulcers have crept deeper, and touched the *Cutis* or real Skin, so that the infecting Humour penetrates the small Veins, and is circled about with the Blood, it soon contaminates its whole Mass, and all the other Juices of the Body, and then becomes confirmed, is more dangerous, and much more difficult to Cure.

So also where it happens to aged People, and likewise if it is complicated with other Distempers, in which last Case, it must be treated with the utmost Skill; for then the Circumstances of the Patient will not often admit of its being cured after the nearest manner, but require it to be managed with great Care and Caution, and with a particular regard to the other illnesses that afflict the Patient, who otherwise may be kill'd instead of being cured, as in another Case happened to a certain Person, who labouring under a Consumption of the Lungs and the Venereal Disease together, the Person he apply'd to for Cure, imprudently put him into a Salivation for the latter, without minding the former, and so destroy'd him; for which he was deservedly Prosecuted in a Court of Justice.

Some Authors, Antient and Modern, are of the Opinion, that when the *Itch* has continued many Months together, and got into the whole Habit of the Body, it cannot be cured; but with Submission, I must dissent from them, being satisfy'd from my own Experience, that the most inveterate *Itch* may be

be perfectly and safely cured by the Rational Method, I shall recommend in the latter Part of this Book, of which I also flatter my self my Readers will be convinced.

Yet that an inveterate *Itch* is much more difficult to Cure than a slight one, is most certain, and the Learned Dr. *Willis* before-mentioned, speaking of some of his Patients that were afflicted with the *Itch*, which proved so stubborn, that with the most powerful Remedies, and even repeated Salivations he could not Cure, tells us, that
 ‘ The Venereal Disease, tho’ it be extremely Malignant, and causes most
 ‘ foul Cacoethick Ulcers that Eat the
 ‘ Flesh and Bones, may more easily
 ‘ and certainly be cured than the *Itch*.

Another Author writing upon this Distemper, has the following Words, ‘ I
 ‘ knew three Brothers, all young Men,
 ‘ die purely of the *Itch*, which by length
 ‘ of Time, becoming habitual, at last corrupted the whole Body, which with putrid and eating Ulcers destroyed them.

And thus we find Authors believe, this Disease when grown inveterate, by
 B being

being neglected too long, to be not only Incurable, but Mortal ; but with them I cannot agree, for in my Opinion, the Disease that kill'd the Three Brothers the last quoted Author mentions (judging by the latter part of his own Words) was rather a confirmed and universal *Scabbiness* that succeeded an inveterate *Itch*, than properly the *Itch* it self, which I believe never proves Mortal till it turns to a loathsome *Scabbiness*, which indeed many times brings on Death.

But besides the Distemper properly call'd the *Itch*, there are particular and inveterate *Itching Humours* of various Kinds or Appearances, that do not affect the Body universally as That does, but fix upon particular Parts only, as in some Persons upon the back of one or both of the Hands, in others upon the Shoulders or Arms ; and in others upon one or both of the Thighs, or some other particular Parts, either of the Head, Face, Body or Limbs, many times about as broad as a Man's Hand ; but some Persons have them much broader, and others much narrower ; and in whatever Parts they first appear, they

they mostly continue, sometimes diminishing, and sometimes increasing, in respect both to largeness and inveteracy, for many Months, and oftentimes Years together, unless prudently managed and perfectly Cured, by Internal as well as External Remedies.

Now and then the inveterate *Itching Humours* of this kind, in some Patients, change their station, and disappearing in the Parts they first affected, soon after arise in others: but this they seldom do, unless the Persons troubled with them, tamper with outward Applications, which, alone, are dangerous, as will be made appear in the following Papers.

These particular *Itching Humours*, in whatever Parts they shew themselves, make the Scarf-Skin look Red, Angry and unequal, and besides the violent itching that mostly attends them, little Pimples, upon scratching, commonly arise, that are very sore for a short time, and often send forth a thin Humour, that may be seen standing upon the Parts affected, almost like Dew, and when the Soreness abates, the Pimples diminish, and the itching increases, and

then little dry Scurf falls off, and fresh Pimples soon arise, so that there is unsufferable itching, and severe foreness, almost at the same time, which proves exceeding troublesome to those unhappily fatigued therewith.

These inveterate *Itching Humours* differ not much from the Disease, called *Scabies*, or *Scabbiness*, excepting only that they confine themselves to particular Parts, as before shewn, and that mostly affects the Body universally.

Scabies, or *Scabbiness*, is a Disease most commonly succeeding an inveterate *Itch*, either moist or dry, for when either kind has continued long, or been ill Cured, so that the very Fountains of the Blood and Juices are corrupted, an inveterate and filthy *Scabbiness* quickly follows, which not only affects the *Cuticula*, or Scarf-Skin, as that does, but penetrates deeper, and fixes upon the *Cutis*, or real Skin, which it gnaws and Ulcerates, and causes nasty Scabs to cover the Parts.

If it follows the moist *Itch*, foul Ichorous Matter issues from them, which is very contagious, and infects any sound Part it touches, but if it succeeds the dry

dry *Itch*, there is seldom any Pufs issues from the Scabs, which then appear very Crusty, dry and nauseous to the sight.

Sometimes a *Scabbiness* happens when the *Itch* has not gone before it, but this is not near so frequent as a *Scabbiness* following the *Itch*, which, as before said, is generally a Preludium to this hateful Distemper.

A *Scabbiness* is also accompanied with itching as well as foreness, especially about the edges of the small Ulcers that void a foul corrupted Pufs in the moist kind, and about the crusty Scabs in the dry sort.

An universal *Scabbiness*, as it is much worse than the *Itch* for Filthiness and Putrifaction, so it is much more dangerous and difficult to Cure.

If it continues long without being Cured, the Ulcerations increase in number as well as largeness, and the discharge of Matter from them is so great, the Humours continually flowing that way, that the Body being robb'd or drained of its moisture, falls of course into a Consumption, which, together with the fatigue the Patient undergoes

in the Day time, and want of Rest and Sleep at Night, occasioned by continual alternate itching and smarting, quickly finishes the fatal Catastrophe, and the unhappy Patient is obliged to submit to a miserable Death.

But this must be understood only of the moist *Scabbiness*, for the dry one, tho' very Inveterate and Malign, yet seldom or never is attended with Death, but first Ushers in a Poisonous *Leprosy*, that soon puts a period to the Patient's Life, if not timely cured.

The *Leprosy* is the most Malignant Distemper that affects the External Parts of the Body, the Blood and Juices being contaminated with its fatal Poison, whence proceeds the great Difficulty of curing it.

The *Leprosy* is sometimes the Hereditary Disease of a Family, but is much more commonly contracted by Infection.

And it may indeed be termed, as in the Learned Dr. *Blancard's* Physical Dictionary, a Disease, by which ' The Temperature, Form and Figure, and at last the very Continuity of the Body is corrupted; and as he again
says,

says, ' Is a Canker commonly to the
' whole Body.

The *Itch* and *Scabies* are commonly the fore-runners of it, for the *Itch*, being neglected, turns to an universal *Scabies*, and That to the *Leprosy* as before shewn, which is the worst of Cutaneous Diseases, and accompanied with the highest degree of Corruption and Putrification.

The Symptoms accompanying this direful Disease, are both Internal and External concisely summ'd up as follows.

' The Internal are Acid or Musty
' Belchings, Costiveness, Thirst, a stinking
' Sweat, thick Urine, insomuch,
' that the Pouder of Lead will swim
' upon it; an extream propensity to
' Venery; thickneſs, viscosity, and un-
' ctuosity of the Blood when drawn
' forth, and little Clots of Sand stick-
' ing to the Cloth thro' which it is
' strain'd; stinking Breath, a weariness
' of the Limbs, Chillness, Stupidity,
' and a hoarse Voice, as if it came thro'
' the Nose.

' The External Symptoms are these,
' the Skin appears livid, black or yel-

low ; it wrinkles when exposed to
 the Cold ; it is notably rough and
 oily, infomuch, that Water will not
 stick to it ; it is covered over with
 a Purple or white Dandriff ; little
 moveable painless Knots and Swel-
 lings beset the Forehead, Chin and
 Joints ; a dry Ringworm and Pushe-
 s cover the whole Body, and affect not
 only the Skin but the Muscles ; an
 eternal *Itch* like the gnawing of
 Worms, or pricking with Needles
 molests 'em ; when they scratch any
 Part, it turns dry and scaly, but voids
 no Matter ; the Hair of their Head
 and Eyebrows falls off ; their Fore-
 head is furrow'd with wrinkles ; their
 Ears stretched and swelled ; the Eye-
 brows callous and raised ; their Eyes
 round, red and sparkling, infested
 with little hard swellings in the cor-
 ners, and apt to water ; the upper
 part of their Nose contracted, while
 the inferiour is enlarged, troubled
 with frequent sneezing, and infected
 with a Polypus and Cancerous corro-
 sive Ulcers ; the Face and Lips are
 pale, hard, livid, and chop'd ; their
 Tongue and Mouth liable to hard
 swellings,

‘ swellings, Chops and Corrosion ; the
 ‘ Gums rough and swol’n ; the Spittle
 ‘ Viscous ; the Breasts hard, and their
 ‘ Veins swol’n ; the Joints withered,
 ‘ and beset with callous indolent Ul-
 ‘ cers, that are apt to bleed upon the
 ‘ slightest touch ; the Muscles of their
 ‘ Hands, especially those of the Thumb,
 ‘ and first Finger, are much consumed ;
 ‘ the Fingers and Toes benumb’d ; the
 ‘ Joints distorted and knotty ; and the
 ‘ Nails black, bowed and chopped.

The Reader, I presume, will readily
 allow, that Persons labouring under all
 these Symptoms, can have but small, if
 any, hopes of Life ; and indeed here
 are so many dreadful ones enumerated,
 that the very Thoughts of them, one
 would think, are sufficient not only to
 sink a Person Afflicted with them to
 the Grave, but also to make him desire
 a speedy Death, as a kind Relief to the
 grievous Misery he must necessarily en-
 dure.

But it must not be imagined, that
 every one affected with the *Leprosy*, is
 afflicted with all these Symptoms ;
 some Persons are not troubled with one
 half

half of them, and yet are as surely *Leprous* as those labouring under the greatest part, or all, that have been summ'd up.

The most distinguishing Sign of the *Leprosy*, is the Fish-like Scales, of a Branny Colour, that fall from the External Parts of the diseased Person; and whether That is attended with many more of the before-mentioned Symptoms, as it mostly is, or not, it bespeaks the *Leprosy*.

The sooner the Cure of this Distemper is undertaken, and the fewer the Symptoms are, the better it will be overcome, and the sooner and more certainly will the Patient be restored to Health; but if it be neglected for a considerable time, till the Symptoms are multiplied, the Strength of the Patient much impaired, and the Disease arrived to the highest degree, it may then be truly said to be incurable, and the suffering Wretch has nothing more to do, than to settle his Worldly Affairs, commit his Soul to God who gave it, and patiently expect his dissolution to put a final End to his intollerable Torment.

By the Account and Description of the Symptoms, Nature, and Danger of the External Diseases here given; I think it plainly appears how inexcusably remiss, and in the last degree wanting to themselves those Persons are, who being afflicted in the slightest manner with Cutaneous Distempers, or such as affect the External Parts Universally, omit to seek for a regular Cure in time, since it has been sufficiently proved, that the most trifling *Itch*, if neglected, becomes more and more inveterate, and advances step by step, from one degree to another, till from the *Itch* it turns to an universal and nauseous *Scabies*, which many times kills the Patients unfortunately troubled with it, and if it does not, turns to a loathsome *Lepra*, that very often proves incurable, and fails not to render the unhappy Sufferers, miserable Spectacles to others, as well as lamentable Torments to themselves, and at last accomplishes their Destruction, by the unavoidable Death it certainly brings on.

And no less imprudent are they who being troubled with *Tetters*, *Ringworms*, and other breakings out, in particular
Parts,

Parts, neglect to get Cured ; for they are for the most part species of one or other of the Diseases I have described, and are of very ill consequence, if not quickly remedied.

I have not enlarged on those several breakings out, by their particular Names, as found in Authors, because, as they may be comprehended under the *Itch*, inveterate *Itching Humours*, *Scabies*, or *Leprosy*, which I have discoursed on ; I would neither tire the Reader's Patience, or swell these Papers beyond my first Intention.

C H A P. II.

Of the Original Cause of the Itch, Inveterate Itching Humours, Scabiness and Leprosy.

THAT the External Diseases I treat of, are for the most part occasioned by Infection, is very certain, there being, I believe, scarce one Person in Fifty troubled with them, but what were infected by others in the manner I have shewn in the foregoing Chapter; yet as the communicating of them from one Person to another, cannot properly be called the Cause, but rather the spreading of Diseases before caused, I design here, passing over that, as sufficiently proved, and already known, to proceed to an inquiry after the Original Cause of those Cutaneous Distempers, when they arise and happen to Persons who have not been infected by, or received them from others, and that from the Opinions of some of the Antient as well as Modern Physicians, many

many of whom assign the *Itch*, *Scabies*, *Leprosy*, &c. to one and the same Cause, and are of Opinion that those Diseases differ from one another only in degree. But it must be allow'd, that inveterate *Itching Humours* in particular Parts, are sometimes of a Scrophulous Nature, and proceed from the *King's-Evil*.

Galen lays the fault of Diseases of the Skin, on melancholly or adust Matter.

Avicen is of Opinion that, ' Blood
' with which Choller is mixt, and that
' with Salt Flegm converted into Melancholly, is the cause of *Scabbiness*.

Langius accuses, ' Impure Cholerick
' Blood, or adust or Fæculent, mixt with
' Liquor of Salt Flegm (produced by
' discracy of the Liver, and oftentimes
' obstruction of the Spleen) as the cause
' of the *Itch*.

The Learned Dr. *Blancard*, in his Physical Dictionary, says, the *Leprosy* is caused by ' Black Bile diffused thro'
' the whole Body.

Others are also of the Opinion, that the *Itch* proceeds from ' Choller, subtilized and sent into the Habit of the
' Body, being mixt with thin Salt
' Flegm,

‘ Flegm, which spreading into the Su-
 ‘ perficies of the Body, breaks out in
 ‘ the *Cuticula* with small watery Pu-
 ‘ stules causing great Itching.

That a *Scabbiness* proceeds from
 ‘ Blood and Lympha defiled with Ex-
 ‘ crementitious Humours, not suffici-
 ‘ ently separated and expelled by Urine,
 ‘ Stool, Sweat, &c. So that the San-
 ‘ guineous and Lymphatick Juices, must
 ‘ of necessity be corrupted with sharp
 ‘ and biting Humours, mixt with Salt
 ‘ Flegm and adust Choller.

That the *Leprosy* is caused by ‘ Salt
 ‘ Flegm possibly putrified with a mix-
 ‘ ture of oily Humours, as a depraved
 ‘ Lympha and adust Choller.

And that the remote Causes of this
 Depravation of the Choller and Lym-
 pha, are ‘ Feeding upon Salt, Acrid and
 ‘ hot Meats; also want of Cleanliness,
 ‘ or keeping the Body sweet and clean.

The Learned and Ingenious *Willis*
 believes the Cause of the *Itch*, &c. to
 be the Depravation of the Humour of
 the Cutaneous Glands; his Words are
 these:

‘ The glandulous Humour depraved,
 ‘ either by the Blood being very im-
 ‘ pure,

‘ pure, and also dissolved, leaving its
 ‘ Corruption and Recrements plenti-
 ‘ fully in the Cutaneous Glands, which
 ‘ there assuming the Nature of a more
 ‘ Corrosive Ferment, does ferment and
 ‘ variously Coagulate with other Juices
 ‘ that come thither or pass that way,
 ‘ and so produces the *Itch*, &c. or the
 ‘ Humour gathered in the Cutaneous
 ‘ Glands, sometimes by mere Stagna-
 ‘ tion, becomes not only Itchy but
 ‘ Corruptive. Therefore those kept
 ‘ long in Prison, or that lead a Seden-
 ‘ tary Life, and are used to filth and
 ‘ stink, are Obnoxious to these Diseases.

Again, the same Author tells us,
 That in a *Scabiness* and *Leprosy*, ‘ *Acido-*
 ‘ *Saline* Concretions (like Tarter in
 ‘ Wine) do happen in the Mass of
 ‘ Blood, which when they cannot be
 ‘ conquered or dissolved, are driven to
 ‘ the Skin, as in the other Case, (*viz.*
 ‘ *Wine*) to the sides of the Cask.

The Excellent *Etmuller* assigns the
 Cause of the *Itch*, to ‘ Sharp Particles
 ‘ of the *Serum*, repairing to the Surface
 ‘ in small Quantities.

Of a *Scabbiness*, to the ‘ Depravation
 ‘ of the Nutritive *Serum*, or Juice of the
 ‘ Parts

• Parts under the Skin, occasioned by
 • a Preternatural Acid, that takes its
 • Rise from sudden Cold, succeeding
 • Heat, and shutting up the Steams of
 • the Body within the straitned Pores;
 • and which by continuance may at
 • last infect the Blood.

He also says, that a *Scabbiness* proceeds
 • sometimes, but very rarely,
 • from Internal Causes, as *Scurvy*, *French*
 • *Pox*, &c.

And treating of the *Leprosy*, he gives
 his Opinion that it is caused by • A
 • Saline Corrosive Acid reigning in the
 • Serum.

He likewise ingeniously gives the
 Reason why Cutaneous Diseases are
 some times moist, and some times dry,
 as follows:

• If the Nutritive Juice be very fe-
 • rous and apt to corrupt, the Break-
 • ings out run much, if balmy and im-
 • pregnated with a Volatile Oily Salt,
 • they are crusty and dry.

By what has been said, it appears how
 much Physicians differ from one another,
 concerning the Cause of those Cutane-
 ous Distempers; but in my Judgment the
 two last quoted Authors, have hit the

Mark much nearer than others, and their Opinions, which amount almost to one and the same thing, will appear more Rational, if what the accurate and learned Physician Dr. J. Keill says concerning the Scarf-Skin, in his Anatomy of the Human Body abridg'd, be consider'd; his Words follow :

‘ This (*i. e. the Scarf-Skin*) is that
 ‘ soft Skin which rises in a Blister upon
 ‘ any burning, or the Application of a
 ‘ Blistering Plaister. It sticks close to
 ‘ the Surface of the true Skin, to which
 ‘ it is also tied by the Vessels which
 ‘ nourish it, tho’ they are so small as
 ‘ not to be seen; when we examine
 ‘ the Scarf-Skin with a Microscope, it
 ‘ appears to be made up of several Lays
 ‘ of exceeding small Scales, which co-
 ‘ ver one another more or less, accord-
 ‘ ing to the different thickness of the
 ‘ Scarf-Skin in the several Parts of the
 ‘ Body. In the Lips where the Scales
 ‘ appear plainest, because the Skin is
 ‘ thinnest, they only in a manner touch
 ‘ one another. Now these Scales are
 ‘ either the excretory Ducts of the
 ‘ Glands of the true Skin, as I think is
 ‘ apparent in Fishes, or else these Glands
 ‘ have

‘ have their Pipes opening between the
 ‘ Scales.

‘ These Scales are often glewed to
 ‘ one another by the grosser parts of
 ‘ our insensible Transpiration, harden-
 ‘ ing upon them by the Heat of our
 ‘ Body, which carries off the more Vo-
 ‘ latile Particles. The Humour, which
 ‘ is afterwards separated by the Glands
 ‘ of the Skin, being pent in between
 ‘ the Scales, causes frequent Itchings;
 ‘ and where the Matter has been lon-
 ‘ ger pent up, small Pimples. Thus
 far the Ingenious Dr. *Keill*.

Now if the Humour designed by
 Nature to be excreted, being pent in
 thro’ Cold or any other Accident, causes
 frequent *Itchings*, and by a longer con-
 tinuance small Pimples, as certainly it
 does, why may it not be supposed, ac-
 cording to *Willis* and *Etmuller*, that, by
 a yet longer Confinement or Stagnation,
 it will be depraved, become corruptive,
 and at last infectious, especially if the
 remote Causes, such as leading a Seden-
 tary Life, eating Salt Meats, the Re-
 licks of other Distempers, or living in
 Nastiness or Filth, have obstructed or
 impaired the Glandules of the Body, or

any way injured their Structure, and also caused irregular Cohæſions of Particles in the Blood and Juices, ſo as to make them apt upon the leaſt Stagnation to Corrupt and Putrify ?

Much might be ſaid to ſtrengthen and defend this Opinion ; yet, after all the fine Speculations and Notions Men have, and propagate concerning the Original Cause of theſe and many other Diſeaſes, it muſt be acknowledged that it is doubtful, whether we can more than gueſs at the real Eſſence of them ; and the moſt faithful Phyſician that ever wrote, the Immortal *Sydenham*, our own Country-man, appears to have had the ſame Sentiments, when treating of another Diſtemper, he tells us :

‘ As to the inſinſick Nature and
 ‘ Eſſence of this Diſeaſe, as they ſay, I
 ‘ count I am to ſeek for it no further
 ‘ than as it appears by the Symptoms
 ‘ we have deſcribed, no more than I
 ‘ am obliged to ſearch into the Eſſence
 ‘ of any Plant or Animal.

This admirable Man being ſenſible, no doubt, of the inſufficiency of Human Reason,

Reason, to penetrate into the Abstruse Principles or first moving Causes of Diseases, seems to have apply'd himself wholly to the Observation of Distempers, their several Symptoms, Stages and Terminations, together with the most Natural and Effectual Method of curing them, as his admirable Works, so justly valued all over *Europe*, shew.

And it would be well if all Persons who Practise Physick, and who have the good of Mankind most at Heart, would Copy after the Learned and Incomparable *Sydenham*, whose Works will never Dye, and whose Example all ought to follow, and not be forward to broach New Notions, and strain every thing to support an embrac'd Hypothesis, or to assert this or that to be the Original Cause of any Distemper, unless it could be made appear by undeniable Demonstration; but rather apply themselves diligently to the Observation of Diseases, thro' their Beginning, State and Declination, and be thereby perfectly acquainted with all their Symptoms, Variations, and Con-

sequences, so as to be able safely and quickly to Cure them, which I am sure all unprejudic'd Persons will agree, would be much better for the unhappy Patients afflicted with Distempers, than for their Physicians to be taken up with airy Speculations concerning them, and at the same time, perhaps, be at a Loss how to effect their Cure.

C H A P.

C H A P III.

Of several Methods of curing the Itch, particular Itching Humours, Scabbiness and Leprosy; the Reasons why so many miss of being Cured; the Danger of falling into grievous and incurable Distempers by ill Methods, and pernicious Mercurial Applications; and of the safe, easy, and effectual Method of Cure advanced by the Author.

MOST Authors agree, that the same Method and Medicines that will Cure an Inveterate *Itch*, will likewise take Place in a *Scabbiness*, *Leprosy*, and most other Defilements of the Skin, if curable; and indeed Experience answers for the Truth of it, only with this difference, that the Method must be closely followed for a longer Time, and the Medicines be made stronger for a *Scabbiness* and *Leprosy*, than it is

requisite they should be for the first mentioned Infection.

But what that Method and those Medicines are, that with the greatest Certainty, least Trouble, and without Danger, will accomplish the Cure of Cutaneous Diseases, is what Physicians differ very much about.

Some recommend Bleeding and Purg-
ing as absolutely necessary; the first to
cause Revulsion, Temperate the Blood,
and allay its too great Ebullition; the
last to cleanse the Stomach, Bowels, and
all the Juices, from impurities, and both
of them to diminish the Humours of
the Body in general, without all which,
they are of Opinion, the *Itch* and other
Defædations, cannot safely or easily, if
at all, be cured.

Others advise to *Sudorificks*, or Sweat-
ing Medicines: and others to *Diureticks*,
or such as work by Urine; some, neg-
lecting all evacuating Medicines, pre-
scribe sweetners of the Blood, and cool-
ing *Alteratives*, which they believe will
Cure by subduing the Chollerick Dispo-
sition and Acrid Quality of the Juices.

Others, laying aside all Internal Re-
medies, rely wholly upon External Ap-
plications

plications for the Cure of Cuticular Maladies, such as Ointments, Baths and Washes, made of Tobacco, Brimstone, Elecampane, Sharp-pointed Dock, &c. and others chiefly insist on Mercury or Quicksilver, outwardly applied, either by a Girdle, or mix'd with Unguents, &c. which they say will effectually kill the *Itch*, and other Diseases of the Skin.

Thus Physical Authors vary exceedingly in their Opinions one from another, and each brings several Reasons and Arguments to support the Opinion he is of, or has advanced ; for some, who plead most for External Applications, have but an indifferent Opinion of Purging, and inveigh mightily against Bleeding, which they say draws the foul Humour, that either never reached deeper than the Skin, or else that Nature had kindly expelled to the outer Parts, into the Blood and Juices, so as certainly to corrupt them, and fix the Distemper upon the whole Habit of the Body, and thereby render it incurable.

Martianus gives an Account of a certain Person, ' Who labouring under the
Itch,

‘ *Itch*, would have Four Pound of Blood
 ‘ taken from him by opening a Vein,
 ‘ upon which, that very Day, revulsion
 ‘ of the Putrid Humour being made
 ‘ from the Skin to the greater Veins
 ‘ by Venæ-Section, he was taken with
 ‘ a Malignant Fever, which kill’d him
 ‘ the Fifth Day.

‘ Letting Blood (*says another Au-*
 ‘ *thor*) must absolutely be avoided in
 ‘ this Cure, for thereby the Impurity is
 ‘ drawn into the Blood, and that de-
 ‘ filed which before was pure.

The famous *Helmont* mentions purg-
 ing Medicines in this Distemper, as
 well as in other Cases, with Deri-
 sion.

But the Learned and Ingenious Dr.
Willis, amongst many others, is of O-
 pinion, that both Bleeding and Purg-
 ing in Cutaneous Diseases are neces-
 sary.

Speaking of Bleeding he says, ‘ The
 ‘ Effect is not taken away till first the
 ‘ Cause be removed, which may this
 ‘ way properly be done. Yea for an
 ‘ universal Disease, such as the *Itch* is,
 ‘ an universal Remedy, such as letting
 ‘ Blood is, seems convenient.

He

He likewise mightily recommends Purging in the following Words,
 ‘ Therefore Purges ought both to be-
 ‘ gin and make an end of this Method
 ‘ of Cure ; for tho’ *Helmont* treats a
 ‘ Cathartick Medicine with high Dis-
 ‘ dain, and, at it were, leads it in Tri-
 ‘ umph, because of it self it does not
 ‘ Cure the *Itch* ; yet we may affirm,
 ‘ that this Disease is scarce ever easily,
 ‘ but never safely cured, without this
 ‘ sort of Physick.

‘ He that would Cure the *Itch*, (*says*
 ‘ *Hartmanus*) must first of all cleanse
 ‘ the Blood, for it lodges in the Saline,
 ‘ Vitriolate, and Aluminous Impurities
 ‘ thereof.

The Learned *Etmuller* also advises to Purging ; and the Excellent Dr. *Sydenham*, directing to sweating Medicines, and outward Applications for an Invererate *Itch*, says, ‘ But these things
 ‘ ought not to be applyed till the Pati-
 ‘ ent’s Body hath been first duly pre-
 ‘ pared by Bleeding and Purging.

Besides the Authorities of these Great and Learned Men for Bleeding and Purging in the *Itch*, &c. there are many Examples given by Authors, of the un-
 happy

happy Consequences of attempting the Cure of External Diseases, by outward Applications only.

Borellus informs us of a Man, who being troubled with an exceeding Itching, and endeavouring to Cure himself with a Wash, in a few Hours after using it ‘ There were Blisters rais’d all over his Body, and in a little while after, he was so troubled with Faintings and Swoonings, that he was very nigh Death.

‘ A lusty Matron (*says Hildanus*) of about Forty Years Old, and of a moist Constitution of Body, when in the Month of *February*, she had put on a Quicksilver Girdle for a small *Itch*, and had worn it for three Weeks Night and Day, she indeed was rid of her *Itch*, but there followed a Salivation, exulceration of the Gums, and heaviness in the Head, which was followed by a Catarrh of the Left Side, and a weakness of the same.

Velschius gives an Account of a Person afflicted with this Disease, ‘ Who neglecting Universals, kill’d the *Itch* with Ointments; presently upon which, defluxions of Salt Humours
‘ super-

‘ supervening and falling upon his
 ‘ Lungs, he spit Blood at times, and
 ‘ at length, an Hectick coming upon
 ‘ him, he died: When he was dead,
 ‘ his Lungs were found altogether cor-
 ‘ rupted, and most part of ’em hardened
 ‘ into a Scirrhus.

By these Accounts, amongst many
 others, that are left upon Record, to
 warn us against the like irreparable
 Mischiefs, the Readers may judge what
 Care there ought to be taken, and
 what Skill there is required in curing
 Chronick Diseases of the Skin; and I be-
 lieve it will be easily allow’d, that it is not
 only requisite to Cure them surely, but
 safely too; for to omit Internal Reme-
 dies, and strike in those Distempers by
 external and repelling Applications, tho’
 never so seemingly innocent in them-
 selves, may be attended with very bad
 Accidents, such as violent Fevers, Asth-
 ma’s, Consumptions of the Lungs, Con-
 vulsions, Falling Sicknefs, Palsies, Apo-
 plexies, Madness, internal Ulcers, Scir-
 rhous Tumours, and other dangerous,
 and oftentimes incurable Maladies, under
 which if the Patients escape with Life,
 they

they may remain miserable all their Days.

For when the malignant Humour is thus forc'd to retire from the external Parts of the Body, it is then circled about with the Blood, till it is deposited and fixed upon such of the Noble internal Parts, as happen to be most weak, or apt to receive it. Thus if it falls on the Brain and Nerves, it produces the Apoplexy, Falling-Sickness, Palsy, Convulsions, or Madness, &c. If it happens to fix on the Breast, it causes a violent Cough, dreadful Asthma, or Ulceration of the Lungs, and incurable Consumption; if upon the Urinary Parts, it occasions the Diseases common to them, such as racking Pains, Dysury, Stranguary, incurable Ulceration of the Kidneys, or Bladder, &c. If upon the Liver and Spleen, Obstructions and Scirrhus Tumours of those Parts are produced; if it fixes on the Bowels, it causes a severe Colick, Diarrhæa, Dysentery, Inflammation of the Guts, or Illiack Passion, &c. And if it does not happen to lodge on any of those particular Parts, it then commonly inflames the whole Mass of Blood universally,

and so produces violent Fevers, continual or intermitting, threatening speedy Death.

And the Illnesses that happen by such imprudent Management, sometimes do not appear till some Months after such outward Applications have been forborn.

What a risk therefore do those run, who, being unhappily troubled with the *Itch*, or other Cutaneous Distempers, endeavour to Cure themselves with Ointments, Washes, Quicksilver Girdles, &c. which if they do not take effect, as very often happens, are then a very great Fatigue to them to no purpose, and if they do Cure, then expose them to the Danger of worse Diseases, and even loss of Life.

The Ingenious Dr. *Fuller*, in the Appendix to his Book Intituled *Medicina Gymnastica*, informs us, that he split upon this Rock, and endured the most violent Illness imaginable for many Years together, by means of curing himself, with a Quicksilver Girdle, of an *Itch* that he had accidentally caught; an Abstract of which take as follows:

‘ I wore it (*says he, meaning a Mercur-*
 ‘ *rial Girdle*) for several Months by
 ‘ times, and then laid it quite aside;
 ‘ but the Mischief was begun, tho’ I
 ‘ was not aware of it; for about a
 ‘ Month after, I awak’d one Morning
 ‘ with an unusual Giddiness, and in a
 ‘ little time after, I found several Con-
 ‘ vulsions begin to come upon me, in
 ‘ the Capillary Arteries of my Eyes,
 ‘ &c. Sometimes I should have my
 ‘ Hands drawn in, and my Fingers
 ‘ brought to the Palm of my Hand in-
 ‘ voluntarily. I was not a little terri-
 ‘ fy’d, as any may imagine; but by
 ‘ proper means the severity of the
 ‘ Symptoms went off, and I remain’d
 ‘ only with a Giddiness, which was ve-
 ‘ ry troublesome. Once upon drinking
 ‘ the *Bath Waters* too long, that Ver-
 ‘ tiginous Rotation was so increased,
 ‘ that I was laid up for a Month with
 ‘ it, being scarce able to go about with-
 ‘ out staggering like a Drunken Man;
 ‘ but this extremity abated, and I re-
 ‘ main’d healthy under that Giddiness
 ‘ for several Years, till happening once
 ‘ to be more indisposed than usually,
 ‘ upon taking a Chalybeate, the Hu-
 ‘ mour

' mour struck deeper into the Nerves
 ' of the Pectoral Muscles, so that I
 ' found my Shoulders begin to be con-
 ' tracted involuntarily, and upon walk-
 ' ing, a shortness of Breath, which I
 ' could discern, was caused by the pre-
 ' ternatural pressure of those Muscles
 ' upon my Breast, which I have some-
 ' times resisted so far, when it has hap-
 ' pen'd to come upon me in the Streets,
 ' before I could get to a House I knew,
 ' that it has made my Eyes Flash, and
 ' brought other Epileptick Symptoms
 ' upon me, that I have been forced to
 ' take into a Shop, and desire leave to
 ' rest me for a time. These things
 ' continued on me a Year or more, and
 ' declining under these Spasms of my
 ' Breast, I was at length quite confined
 ' to my Home for near Three Months,
 ' all the while growing worse and
 ' worse, in spite of the Power of any
 ' Medicines I took, when it happened
 ' that I was casually directed to the
 ' use of Riding, in order to which I
 ' removed to *Hampstead*, where I rode
 ' at least twice a Day, for the space of
 ' Seven Weeks. After I had by these
 ' means recovered a good measure of

‘ Health, I enjoyed it about a Year and
 ‘ half, by the help of Riding at due In-
 ‘ tervals; but thinking my self stronger
 ‘ than I really was, and Riding long
 ‘ Journeys, I was took of a sudden
 ‘ with the strangest sort of *Deliquium*
 ‘ (or *Fainting*) that perhaps ever was
 ‘ heard of; to these sort of Fits was
 ‘ added a *Diarrhea* (or *Looseness*) which
 ‘ was attended with a Nauseousness
 ‘ and Inclination to Vomit; and what
 ‘ is Remarkable, those Nights after
 ‘ my Vomiting, I should Sweat to that
 ‘ degree, as to make my Shirt and
 ‘ Sheets as wet as if they had been
 ‘ dip’d in Water, upon which I was
 ‘ refreshed and freed from the greater
 ‘ severity of those Symptoms, which
 ‘ plainly shews how pernicious that
 ‘ Pforadick (or *Itchy*) Salt was, which
 ‘ the Mercurial Particles had repelled
 ‘ and intimately mix’d in my Blood.

‘ Thus I had Three Calamities upon
 ‘ me at once, a Flux, a Vomiting, and
 ‘ the *Deliquiums* (or *Faintings*) I spoke
 ‘ of before, the last of which had some-
 ‘ thing so incredible to ’em, that I shall
 ‘ forbear to relate it; I do not speak
 ‘ in heat, but seriously and calmly,
 ‘ that

' that the Vomiting, tho' very frequent
 ' and severe, was desirable, if compared
 ' with these most strange Faintings,
 ' which were so tormenting and insup-
 ' portable, that if I had been Stab'd,
 ' or had had my Flesh cut with Knives,
 ' I am certain I could much easier have
 ' born it; I betook my self to mode-
 ' rate Riding again, and held out even
 ' under such pressing Severities, as I
 ' have related, no less a time than a
 ' Year and Nine Months, when at
 ' length these Evils gained upon me,
 ' and my Vomitings were so frequent,
 ' and incredibly violent, that they took
 ' away the use of my Limbs, so that I
 ' was forced to be lifted every time up-
 ' on my Horse, that I might continue
 ' my Riding, tho' it were but to gain
 ' a little periodical Ease, till that seizure
 ' of my Limbs increasing, I was con-
 ' fined to my Chamber, my Legs and
 ' Thighs swell'd, and I was very near
 ' the End of this tedious Journey of
 ' Life.

The Account this Learned and Inge-
 nious Physician gives of his own dread-
 ful Illness, occasioned by the wearing
 of a Quicksilver Girdle, together with

the Instances before given, of the Mischiefs that have been done by that Method, as also by Washes and Ointments, are sufficient, one would think, to deter all Persons from tampering with outward Medicines, for the Cure of Cutaneous Diseases, without taking proper Internal Remedies also, by the Direction of a Skilful Physician.

And here it will not be amiss to exemplify the great danger of Quicksilver Girdles, by another Case that lately happen'd.

On the 24th of *May* last, an Ingenious Woman of very good repute, in the utmost Fright and Consternation (for which, indeed, she had a great deal of Reason) desired my Assistance: She gave me to understand, that she had for some time before, been troubled with the *Itch*, and for the Cure of it, had put on a Quicksilver Girdle, which, in a short time, raised such a violent Salivation, as I scarce ever saw before; for besides the ordinary Symptoms of soreness of the Mouth, exulceration of the Gums, stinking Breath, looseness of Teeth, &c. it was attended with others very severe and dangerous; particularly

larly such a prodigious Inflammation and swelling of the Glandules about her Throat, that at first I questioned very much whether I should be able to save her Life; and I really believe if she had not apply'd for Relief as she did, she would in a little time have been suffocated or choak'd, and so have perish'd by the effect of that pernicious Girdle.

I immediately endeavour'd to check the Salivation, and remove the Symptoms by *Catharticks*, *Specifick Absorbents*, *Cardiacks*, *Gargarisms*, and other proper Remedies, which by God's Blessing, had all the wish'd for Success, sav'd her from the Grave, and restor'd her to perfect Health.

The narrow escape this Woman had, and what has been said before on this head, will, I hope, prevent all Persons who happen to read these Papers, from making use of Mercurial or Quicksilver Girdles, on any account whatsoever.

Neither is frequent Bleeding, or in a large quantity at a time, to be attempted without Danger; for it is certain that irregular Bleeding many times draws the pernicious Humour of the

Itch, &c. from the Scarf-Skin, which alone was infected, into the Mass of Blood, and to the Internal and more Noble Parts, that before were not in the least tainted with it.

So likewise Purging imprudently with strong Medicines, will have the same effect, and not often clear the External Parts of their troublesome Defilement neither; many times Patients may Purge themselves into the Grave, with the common violent *Catharticks*, before their Skin will be freed from the *Itch, &c.* and this the Learned *Helmont* well knew, and made a handle of it to despise Purging, in the manner before mentioned.

If therefore Learned Physicians themselves, who make the Body of Man, and all the Defects and Distempers it is liable to, their continual Study; and who are well acquainted with the Virtue, Nature and Use of Medicines, which are keen Instruments in their Hands, and which, when well applied, restore the Diseased Body to pristine Health, but when improperly prescribed, quite the contrary; if, I say, such Eminent Men make false steps, as in
the

the Instance just now given, and differ from one another about the most effectual Method of curing the *Itch, &c.* as already shewn ; how should the afflicted Patients, who must be supposed to be wholly Ignorant of the Nature, Cause, &c. of the Distemper, and who know not the Virtue of Medicines, or at least, when, and when not, there is a proper Indication for their use, be able to form a right Judgment, or take and use the most seemingly Innocent Remedies, without extream Danger ?

Having thus given the Opinion of Physicians, concerning Bleeding, Purg- ing, and External Applications in the Cure of the *Itch, &c.* and apprised the Reader of the Danger that attends the unskilful use of them, it may not be amiss to offer my own Opinion concerning their true use, and then describe the Method that to me appears most Rational for the Cure of Cutaneous Distempers, and which Experience has confirmed to be the Safest, Surest, and most Expeditious to eradicate the *Itch, Inveterate Itching Humours, Scabbiness, and Leprosy*, when curable.

First then, as to Bleeding, it ought not promiscuously to be advised to all Persons, neither is it absolutely to be forborn; large or frequent Bleeding weakens the Patient, and, as already said, draws the Infection inwards, and often fixes it upon the habit of the Body, so as to render it very difficult to Cure; but to omit Bleeding entirely, where a Patient is Young, and of a Plethorick Constitution, and whose Juices are apt to be much disturbed, and whole Body disordered upon administering Remedies, is certainly very erroneous; and that omission may be attended with an acute Fever, or other Accident, endangering Life.

Extreams therefore must be avoided, and if a Fever is to be feared, Bleeding in a small quantity, may without Danger of attracting the foul Humour inwards, be premised, in order to prevent all Accidents, but, in my Opinion, for no other reason.

Gentle Purging is always requisite for all Persons, whose Circumstances of Body will admit of it, some very few excepted; but the strong common Purges must be avoided, not only as

too fatiguing to the Patient, but pernicious also; for all *Catharticks* made use of in these Cases, ought to be very gentle, that so Nature may not be oppressed, but on the contrary assisted, and the offending Matter be carried off by a constant and easie Evacuation, by which the Patient escapes the Danger, of drawing the Diseasy Humour to the Internal Parts, and of fixing it in the Blood and Juices, which violent Purges would expose him to.

Proper External Applications are also exceeding necessary to expedite the Cure, and to eradicate more certainly the foul Infection, and are very safe to be used, when gentle *Catharticks* (with which *Specificks* must ever be mixed) are also inwardly given; but are very dangerous when used unskilfully, alone, or without the necessary Precautions.

In the choice of External Applications, there is much Judgment required, for such as are proper for one Person troubled with the *Itch*, &c. may not be so for another, yet in general they ought to be of a very subtle and penetrating Nature, that they may easily

enter

enter the External Pores of the Skin, and be also endued with a Specifick quality, to mortify or kill the pernicious sharp Humour lodged therein, and likewise be adapted to enlarge the excretory Ducts, that there may be free perspiration for the future, and that the excrementitious Salts combined with Sulphur, may no more be pent in, and by Stagnation acquire Acrimony, and so cause Itching, &c.

Specifick *Alteratives*, *Diureticks*, and *Sudorificks*, are also often very useful to mend the Crasis of the Blood, depurate the Juices, rectify the Glands, open the External Pores, and restore their Tone, and must be prescribed as the Case may require.

I might here give various Prescriptions, of Remedies of every kind I have mentioned, from the Works of Learned and Eminent Physicians, for the Cure of the *Itch*, inveterate *Itching Humours*, *Scabbiness* and *Leprosy*; but considering that the Judgment of a Skilful Man is always requisite for their right Application, even in the most trifling *Itch*, and that tho' those Prescriptions might be excellent in their kind, and should
fully

fully answer the Character Authors have given of them ; yet if Patients should proceed on their own Heads, and unskilfully take or use them, they might prove very prejudicial, and, instead of Curing their Diseases, injure their Bodies, and perhaps endanger their Lives, I thought it best to omit them.

But the Method that I think most proper to Cure the *Itch*, and other Chronick Diseases of the Skin, is this : In the first place, if the Patient is Young, of a Sanguine Complexion, Plethorick, or inclined to a Fever ; the Day before I order any Medicines, I direct to Bleeding in a small quantity, in order to prevent a Fever, or other acute Illness, and for no other end ; but if no such accident is to be feared, I omit Bleeding, and immediately advise to both Internal and External Remedies, to be taken and used together.

The External Medicines I direct to, certainly clear the Skin from all manner of foulness ; rendring it in a short time smooth, fair, and entirely free from Itching, and from all Pimples, Scurf, Scabs,
and

and other Defædations; whilst the Internal ones, which are gently *Purging*, *Diuretick* and *Alterative*, cleanse the Blood and Juices from Impurities, destroy and carry off sharp Humours, and Acrid Particles, that may have intimately mixed with the Blood, and infected its whole Mass; break the Combinations of Saline and Sulphureous Corpuscles, rectify the Glandules, free the Pores from obstructing Viscosities, and effectually clear the whole Habit from all Filth and Putrifaction whatsoever; and yet are so homogeneous to Nature, as not to cause any sickness at Stomach, disorder of Body, or require Confinement, more than barely to guard against Wet Weather, or more than ordinary Cold.

Neither are the External Remedies I advise to, compounded with Brimstone, or accompanied with any nauseous Smell, but may be used by the most delicate Person without Offence, and yet are more effectual for the Intention than those with which Brimstone is mixt: Now by this Method and the Medicines I Order, (which I always prepare my self, and which both

External

External and Internal are different from the common Remedies) the Diseasey Matter, in whatsoever corner it lurks, will be ferrited out and entirely destroyed, with safety to the Patients, who will thereby be happily restored to their Pristine Health.

It may here be enquired of me, why, since the External Medicines I speak of, will effectually clear the Skin from all Defædations, I do not rely on them for the Cure of a recent *Itch*, that has only infected the Scarf-Skin, and not penetrated deeper, without advising to Internal Remedies? To which I answer, That no Man can be assured, that some of the subtle Itchy Particles have not penetrated the small Blood Vessels, and if it should happen that they have, tho' the *Itch*, to appearance, is perfectly cured, yet those small Particles, that by getting into the Blood have escaped being destroyed by the outward Remedies, will, by circulating about with it, soon infect all the Fluids, and so the *Itch* will break out again in a few Months after, and prove worse and more stubborn than before

before, as Persons without Number who have endeavoured to be cured that way, have experienced to their Cost, and which, by taking proper Internals at the same time, might have been effectually prevented ; besides, by administering peculiar Purging Medicines, all Accidents and Distempers that the using of even the Safest outward Applications make the Patients liable to, as before shewn, are absolutely guarded against.

It may likewise be asked, why, if the Internal Remedies I direct to, are of such Efficacy as I mention, I do not wholly depend upon them for the Cure of Diseases of the Skin, without advising to External Applications ? To which it may be answered, that we ought to attack such stubborn Distempers with all our force, and by all likely ways of succeeding ; besides which, we cannot reasonably suppose it possible, for a Patient to be cured near so soon by Internal Medicines alone, as by them and External Applications together ; the whole Mass of Blood and Juices will take up a considerable time to be perfectly

perfectly altered and purified, and much longer will it be, before the Diseasey Particles lodged in the External Pores of the Skin, can by Internals alone, be absolutely overcome and destroyed; but when with them we join proper outward Remedies, which are always safe whilst gentle *Catharticks*, &c. are given inwardly, we then answer all the Intentions of Cure, and strike home to the Morbifick Matter, so as to destroy it Root and Branch, and from thence may reasonably promise our selves happy Success in a very short time.

From what has been said, may be gathered the reasons why so many Persons miss of being perfectly cured of the *Itch*, &c. for many Months, and oftentimes Years; for by using outward Applications alone, tho' proper ones, the Cure even of a new caught *Itch* is not often perfectly accomplished, and when it is, not without Danger; neither can Persons handsomely, I'm sure not expeditiously, be Cured by taking Internal Medicines, though never so good, unless assisted with proper

per External at the same time ; and to take and use Internal and External Remedies together, that are not very Efficacious (a misfortune often happening to Persons who follow the Vulgar Methods) is only trifling with their Affliction ; for if they happen to be better, and seem quite Cured, it is generally but for a short time, and the Disease soon after breaks out again, with greater force than before.

Many Persons have been thus fatigued with a simple *Itch*, sometimes for Years together, and at last ended their Days, by means of a severe *Scabbiness* or *Leprosy*, when if at first they had been treated in a regular Method, with the most effectual Medicines, they might have been compleatly Cured, perhaps in a few Days.

To these Reasons, why Persons miss of being entirely cured, we may add, that those afflicted with the *Itch*, &c. are for the most part ashamed to own it, and also imagining, being otherwise well in Health, that the Disease is but of slight Consequence, and not at all Dangerous, they neglect to apply to

a Skilful Physician for their Cure, but follow the Advice of some good Woman or other, few of whom are without a Receipt, of some Ointment, or other Medicine, which they really think will certainly Cure the *Itch*, &c. or else they take or use Brimstone, the vulgar Remedy, which, besides its Nauseousness, often proves of dangerous Consequence, especially to those Hectically inclined; and so the Patients are very much fatigued, and many times ruined instead of being Cured.

Some People I have met with, who think so lightly of the *Itch* as to judge it a thing of nothing, a slight matter, scarce worth minding, and are so very weak as to expect to be cured for a Trifle, and seem frightned when they are told of being put into a regular Method of Cure, that will come to more than a Crown or Ten Shillings Expence.

To hear such Persons talk would almost provoke one to Laughter, were it not for the dismal Effects that usually attend their Ignorance; for I have observed, that for the most part

it is this Class of People who are seldom cured of the *Itch*, but suffer it in length of Time, to terminate in a foul *Scabbiness* or loathsome *Leprosy*; or if they are cured of the *Itch* by Brimstone, Quicksilver Girdles, Ointments, &c. to one or other of which they commonly have Recourse, they are often precipitated into other dreadful Diseases; in either of which Case, they would then give above half they are worth in the World to be restor'd to Health.

It would be well therefore if those troubled with the *Itch*, &c. would seriously reflect upon the dangerous Consequences I have mention'd, and consider, That it is not This or That Medicine (tho' never so good) that ought to be relied on; but that it is requisite to know when, and when not it is proper: That the Habit of the Body, State of the Disease, and other Circumstances of the Patient, should be carefully considered: That the best Medicines often prove hurtful, when prescribed unskillfully, or at Random; and that therefore for Patients

ents to proceed on their own Heads, or to follow the Advice of Women, or unskilful Persons, is exceeding dangerous, may be attended with dismal Consequences, and perhaps cost them their Lives.

Among the many Instances I could give of the taking and using Brimstone ineffectually, I shall only trouble my Readers with the following, which is very remarkable.

A Country Gentleman happening in a Family who were all troubled with the *Itch*, was quickly infected with that Distemper, which, as soon as he perceived, he endeavoured to Cure by taking Brimstone and Milk inwardly, and using Brimstone in an Ointment outwardly in a very plentiful manner, according to the vulgar Method, and for a longer Time than is customary, but to no purpose; for he declared to me, that his *Itch* continued upon him as vexatious and bad as ever.

He then had the Opinion of several Physicians one after another, and by their Advice took and used abundance of Medicines, which, together

with their Fees, cost him a large Sum of Money ; at last the Distemper seem'd to be conquer'd, and he thought himself perfectly cured, and in a short space of Time married ; soon after which, the *Itch* broke out again upon him to as great a degree as ever ; neither did the New married Lady escape, but was as much pestered with that Distemper as himself.

At that time he happened to meet with the first Edition of this little Book, and after reading it, thought proper to put himself and Spouse under my Care for Cure ; and in a short time, by punctually following my Directions, they were both entirely freed from that tormenting Disease, for which the Gentleman (who could neither be cured by Brimstone, or any of the Medicines he had before taken and used) with abundance of Thanks, not only paid me to my content, but also made me a handsome Present, expressing at the same time the greatest Joy and Satisfaction for being so fortunate as to meet with my short Account,
which

which he said he would not but have seen for ever so much, the reading of it having caused him to apply to me, and he (as he was pleased to say himself) so safely and easily cured; for he assured me, that what he had taken and used before by his Physicians Prescriptions, (as well as the Brimstone) was not only ineffectual, but very nauseous, and withal exceeding costly.

Brimstone also in the Cure of the *Itch*, &c. is attended with this further inconvenience, that it obliges those who take and use it, either to confine themselves during the whole Course, or else to let every one they come near, know they are troubled with the *Itch*; for the smell of it is so very strong, as not to be overcome, or be concealed from even those who only just pass by the Persons who use it, much less from them they converse with, to whom it smells much more plain, strong and filthy than to themselves: And it is as natural for People to believe that those who use Brimstone, use it for the *Itch*, as it is for them

to believe, that those who smell of it, use it.

As to such as are ashamed to own they are troubled with the *Itch*, &c. and for that Reason neglect to apply to a Physician, or Skilful Person, for Cure, they are certainly much in the wrong; for they may be assured, that it is the Principle, as well as Interest of all Physicians, or Persons practising Physick, to keep private any Illness their Patients are desirous to conceal, and to direct to such Remedies as may be taken and used privately, without the knowledge of any other Person, and without Confinement; as the Medicines I advise to, in such Cases, most certainly may, and so, as not to be discover'd even by the nearest Friend, tho' lying in the same Bed.

I must not omit another Reason, why Persons are often pestered with the *Itch*, every Three or Four Months, Spring and Fall, &c. viz. That when by a proper Method they find themselves tollerably well, and free from Itching, &c. they grow weary of the trouble of taking and using Medicines, and leave them off before the Diseasey Particles

Particles are wholly Eradicated, and thereby deceive themselves : for if the least part of the Itchy Infection happens to remain in their Cloaths, Gloves, &c. as sometimes may happen, even after Washing, they then catch the Distemper afresh, which would be prevented by continuing the use of Remedies, according to the Directions of a Skilful Man, for a reasonable Time, that so all the very Seeds of the Disease, either in their Bodies or Cloaths, may be utterly destroyed.

And for the better preventing all Danger of this kind, it is necessary for the Patients, as soon as all Itching and appearance of the Distemper is taken off, to change their Cloaths, Sheets, &c. immediately, and be very careful not to wear them again, till they are sure, by often boiling, washing, and cleansing, all the Itchy Particles that lodged in them, are entirely mortify'd and expung'd.

For want of due Care in this particular only, abundance of Persons have been exceedingly fatigued with this hateful Disease, on and off, for

many Months, and sometimes Years together ; of which I could give several Examples that have happen'd within my own Knowledge, but shall mention but one.

A Gentleman of Consideration came to me about a Month since, troubled with a severe and universal *Itch* ; upon enquiring how he had received the Infection, &c. he told me he had been troubled with that Distemper some Months before, but had been perfectly cured of it, and assured me, that he caught it again to the degree I saw, only by his Servant giving him, by mistake, a pair of Gloves to wear, that he remembered afterwards to have worn once or twice at the most, during the time he was first pester'd with the *Itch*. He added, that he kept them on his Hands scarce an Hour, before he perceived the mistake, threw them away, and presently wash'd and scour'd his Hands two or three times, but all to no purpose ; for the *Itch* soon discovered itself between his Fingers, &c. and from thence spread all over his Body.

By

By this Relation all Persons may perceive how very subtle, penetrating, and infecting the Itchy Particles are, that could lie so long in a pair of Gloves, and afterwards so soon and so far insinuate themselves into the Skin, as not to be wash'd or scour'd off, but to cause a very severe, universal and stubborn *Itch*.

This Gentleman I put into a regular Method of Cure, which soon had the desired Effect, for which he handsomely gratify'd me, and is at this Time perfectly well.

Now by the Method I have advanced, the Directions I give, and the Medicines I have mentioned to use, (which, as before said, I always prepare my self, and which are not difficult to take or to be apply'd, or in the least fatiguing to the Patients) those miserably afflicted with the *Itch*, inveterate *Itching Humours*, *Scabbiness*, or *Leprosy*, that are Cureable, and even many that have been pronounced incurable, may be certainly restored to Health in a reasonable time, proportionably to the Stubbornness and Inveteracy of those Diseases.

So also Persons troubled with the *King's-Evil*, stubborn *Scrophulous Breakings out*, *Tumours*, *Running Ulcers*, &c. may, by the Method I have proposed, be more assuredly and sooner Cured, with the Blessing of God, than by any other whatever.

A few Remedies well adapted and rightly administred, for a reasonable time in all those Cases, will generally take Effect, without fatiguing the Patients with a vast number of Medicines, to nauseate their Stomachs, and tire their Patience.

But what hinders many People afflicted with the *King's-Evil* and *Leprosy* from being cured, is their want of sufficient Resolution to go through a regular Course; for tho' they are put into one that is neither nauseous, troublesome, or requiring Confinement; and though they seem at first resolved to go through it, and are convinced, that unless they do continue it for a reasonable time, they cannot be cured; yet, which is strange, they often stagger in their Resolution, grow weary they know not why,
and

and many times leave off before they themselves can so much as expect Relief; whereas if they would have steadfastly adhered to the Resolution they first took, they might in all human probability, have been certainly cured of their Distemper, and restored to perfect Health.

There are also many Persons, labouring under the last mentioned stubborn Chronick Diseases, who dreading the uncertain Expence of a regular Course of Medicines, are desirous to enter into a Contract to be cured for a certain Sum of Money. These sort of People, in my Opinion, are the fittest in the World to fall into the Hands of some of our bold, daring Practitioners, who venture at all, and never fail to promise wonders; for Patients of this kind are apt to be pleased and taken with the positive Assurances these Men give them, of perfectly and infallibly curing them, &c. whereas a modest, faithful Physician neither will nor ought to undertake Patients in that manner, but only desire a reasonable Price for his
Medicines,

Medicines, and a suitable Consideration for his Trouble, Advice or Attendance; neither will he give his Patients such positive Assurances of an infallible Cure, but be cautious in what he says, and only promise in these and all other difficult Cases, to endeavour to the utmost of his Power to Cure them; and for that End, put them into such a rational Course of Medicine, as he really believes, and has found, to be most effectual for such stubborn Maladies, and from which Course they, as well as he, may reasonably, and in all likelihood, expect the desired Success.

This is the only Method I take; and the Success God has been pleased to bless me with in the Cure of the *Itch*, inveterate *Itching Humours*, *Scabbiness*, &c. is very remarkable, and I believe can hardly be parallel'd, I having since I first published this little Treatise, discharg'd from under my Care Numbers of Persons, who apply'd to me for Cure of inveterate Diseases of the Skin, perfectly well, and who are, many of them, Men
of

of the first Rank, and of Eminent Learning and Parts, and had gone through many Courses of Physick to no purpose, before they came to me, particularly one Gentleman, a Divine of the Church of *England*, who having been unfortunately afflicted with a very foul Scabbiness for some Years, and had ineffectually tried almost all Methods, I perfectly cured in a very short time, (considering the inveteracy of the Disease) to his entire Satisfaction.

I cannot here conclude without taking Notice of the absurdity of some Practisers, who confine themselves to one set of Medicines which they give to all Persons troubled with the Distempers I have treated about, and which they think will answer the end in People of all Habits, Ages and Constitutions, which undoubtedly is altogether against Reason, and needs no further Confutation.

I find my self often obliged to vary my Medicines, according to the State of the Disease, Habit and other Circumstances of the Patient, tho' generally

rally speaking, the Method I take (except in some extraordinary Cases, in which a *Cardiack* and *Sudorifick* Course, &c. may be required, and where Diseases of the Skin are complicated with other Illnesses) is one and the same, tho' the Medicines may be different.

And even for a Consideration of less moment than that of Health, *viz.* for conveniency of the Patient, it is some times necessary to change the External Remedies; as for Example, instead of ordering Ointments outwardly, I have been obliged for the sake of nice Persons, who were utterly against using any thing daubing, or that would appear upon their Linnen, to prepare a Liquor as clear as fair Water, and of a pleasant Scent, to be used externally for the same purpose, and which will certainly have the same good Effect, it being a delicate Medicine, very Efficacious, and not to be seen after using, either upon the Skin or Linnen, only being a difficult Preparation is something more expensive to the Patient than many other Applications.

From

From this short Account of Cutaneous Diseases, I hope my Readers, at least the unprejudiced part of them, will be convinced that the *Itch, &c.* may be easily and safely cured without the use of Brimstone, Confinement of the Patient, or knowledge of other Persons ; for that there are other Remedies much pleasanter, and more effectual than Brimstone (which besides its nauseousness, oftentimes will not Cure ; but on the contrary, when taken and used by Hectical Persons, proves very injurious) is most certain, since Experience vouches for it ; and that Patients may be cured of the *Itch, &c.* without more than ordinary Confinement, is as true, since the Evacuating Remedies I have found necessary, and make use of, are so very gentle, as that those who take them may go Abroad about their Business, without any Disorder, or further Observation, than only not to expose themselves to wet Weather, or to extraordinary Cold ; and also, that Patients may be cured without

out the knowledge of other Persons, is very plain, becaule the External Medicines I advise to, may be used privately; and as they have not any ill Scent, they cannot by that means be discovered.

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- The Humour of those who are desirous of making a
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- The Author's Success in the Cure of Diseases of the
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